

Dear Sirs,

I am a retailer of 35 years' experience and currently run two stores in St Helier.

For me the major issues are GST, town access and lack of direction for the markets.

GST de minimus threshold:

I am still incredulous that in a world where people are generally understanding of the need for tax, the de minimis level on imports has not been scrapped. I feel we need to look not just at the cost of collecting lower tax values as a justification not to, but also at the loss of local tax revenue when money is spend online and local stores close. To scrape this tax loophole would be a major shot in the arm of local retail and help alter a perception that the high street is always more expensive.

Town Access:

Provision of adequate numbers of parking spaces is also key to keep people using the high street. Free or reduced parking charges on Saturdays would help, but primary we need to maintain or increase parking availability, especially North of Town.

The Central Market:

I have retailed in the Central Market for 25 years. The market is undeniably the historic hub of the town. Unfortunately I do not feel that Property Holdings possess the necessary skill set to drive the markets forward in this changing retail landscape. Over the years I have been involved, no public servant has had the drive, support or vision required and I fear that only a private management team working for the states would make the hard decisions necessary. Unfortunately Liberty Wharf is much better placed to provide that 'Covent Garden' experience that retail needs to attract leisure shoppers. The markets are now, more than ever, in need of management with a clear vision on the way forward, along with the courage and support to act. To safeguard this incredible asset which also underpins the north of town shopping experience I believe is key to supporting local retail.

Kind Regards

Robert McAllister